

Personal Protective Equipment

Workers must use personal protective equipment, but it is not a substitute for taking safety measures. Workers still need to avoid hazards (Figure 1).

Head Protection

- Workers must wear hard hats when overhead, falling or flying hazards exist and also when danger of electrical shock and burns is present.
- Inspect hard hats routinely for dents, cracks or deterioration.
- If a hard hat has taken a heavy blow or electrical shock, you must replace it even when you detect no visible damage.
- Maintain hard hats in good condition. Do not drill; do not clean with strong detergents or solvents; do not paint; do not store them in extreme temperatures.



Figure 1.

This worker is preparing to cut lumber while wearing the proper personal protective equipment. He is wearing a hard hat and safety glasses, and the saw is guarded correctly. His employer has determined that he should use hearing protection.

Hearing Protection

- The prolonged exposure to noise produces permanent damage to hearing.
- When noise levels cannot be reduced below the permissible levels, the employer must provide (and workers must use) hearing protection devices.
- Plain cotton does not provide hearing protection. Use earplugs or other protective devices recommended by a competent person.